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THE RECONCILER:

OR

An Epiſtle Pacificatorie of the ſeeming differences of opinion concerning the true being and viſibilitie of the *Roman Church.*

ENLARGED

With the addition of Letters of Reſolution, for that purpoſe, from ſome famous Divines of our CHVRCH.

By *Joſ: Exon.*

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TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE, AND truly religious, my singular good Lord, *Edward* Earle of *Norwich*.

My ever honoured Lord;

Confesse my charity led me into an error; Your Lordshippe well knowes how apt I am to be overtaken with these better deceits of an over kinde credulitie. I

had thought that any dash of my pen, in a sudden, and easie advertisement, might have served to have quitted that ignorant scandall, which was cast upon my mis-taken assertion, of the true visibility of the Romane Church. The issue proves all otherwise: I finde, to my griefe, that the misunderstanding tenacitie of some zealous spirits hath made it a quarrell. It cannot but trouble me to see that the position, which is so familiarly current with the best reformed Divines, & which hath beene so oft and long since published by mee without contradiction, yea, not without the approbation and applause of the whole representative body of the Clergie of this kingdome, should

now

now be quarrelled, and drawne into the deteſtation of thoſe that know it not; As one therefore that ſhould thinke it coroſive enough, that any occaſion ſhould be taken by ought of mine, to ravell but one thred of that ſeamleſs coat, I doe earneſtly deſire, by a more full explication, to give cleare ſatisfaction to all Readers; and by this ſeaſonable reconcilement, to ſtop the flood-gates of contention, I know it will not be unpleaſing to your Lordſhip, that through your honourable and pious hands, theſe welcome papers ſhould be tranſmitted to many; Wherein I ſhall firſt beſeech, yea adjure all Chriſtians, under whoſe eies they ſhall fall, by the dreadfull name of that GOD, who ſhall

judge both the quicke, and the dead, to lay aſide all unjuſt prejudices; and to allow the words of Truth, and Peace; I dare confidently ſay, Let us be underſtood, and we are agreed.

The ſearcher of all harts knows how far it was from my thoughts to ſpeak ought in favour of the Roman Synagogue: If I have not ſufficiently branded that Strũper, I juſtly ſuffer. *Luthers* broad word is by me already both ſafely cõſtrued, & ſufficiently vindicated. But, doe you not ſay, It is a true viſible Church? Doe you not yeeld ſome kinde of communion with theſe clients of Antichriſt? What is, if this be not, favour? Marke well, Chriſtian Reader, and the Lord give thee underſtanding in all

Ob.

things: To beginne with the latter; No man can ſay but the Church of Rome holds ſome Truths; thoſe truths are Gods, and in his right, ours, why ſhould not wee challenge our owne, whereſoever we finde it? If a verie Devill ſhall ſay of Chriſt, *Thou art the Sonne of the living God*, wee will ſnatch this truth out of his mouth, as uſurped; and in ſpight of him, proclaime it for our own. Indeed, there is no communion betwixt light and darkneſſe, but there is communion betwixt light and light; Now all truth is light, and therefore ſymboliseth with it ſelfe. With that light, therefore, whoſe glimmering yet remaines in their darkneſſe, our clearer light will, and muſt hold com-

Reſp.

communion; If they profeſſe three Perſons in one Godhead; two natures in one perſon of Chriſt; ſhall we decrect to joine with them in this Chriſtian veritie? We abhorre to have any communion with them in their errors, in their idolatrous or ſuperſtitious practices, theſe are their owne, not ours. If we durſt have taken their part in theſe, this breach had not beene; Now who can but ſay that wee muſt hate their evill, and allow their good? It is no countenance to their errors that we imbrace our owne truths; It is no diſparagement to our truths, that they have blended them with their errors: Here can be no difference, then, if this communion bee not miſ-taken; no man

man will say that we may sever from their common truths; No man will say that we may joyne with them in their hatefull errours.

For the former; Hee that saith a theefe is truly a man, doth hee therein favour that theefe? He that saith, a diseased, dropsied, dying bodie, is a true (though corrupt) body, doth he favour that disease, or that living carcasse? It is no other, no more that I say of the Church of Rome: Truenesse of being, and outward visibility, are no praise to her, Yea, these are aggravations to her falshood: The advantage that is both sought and found in this assertion is onely ours, as we shall see in the sequell, without any danger of their gain.

I ſay, then, that ſhe is a true church, but, I ſay withall, ſhee is a falſe Church: True in exiſtence, but falſe in beleefe: Let not the homonymie of a word breed jarres, where the ſenſe is accorded: If we doe not yeeld her the true being of a Church, why do we call her the Church of Rome? What ſpeake we of? or where is the ſubject of our queſtion? who ſees not that there is a morall trueneſs, and a naturall? He that is morally the falſeſt man, is, in nature, as truly a man, as the honeſteſt; and therefore in this regard as true a man: In the ſame ſenſe therefore that wee ſay the Devill is a true (though falſe) ſpirit, that a cheater is a true (though falſe) man, wee may & muſt ſay, that the Church

of Rome is a true (though falſe) Church; Certainely, there hath beene a true errour, and miſ-taking of the ſenſe that is guiltie of this quarrell. As for the viſibility, there can be no queſtion: Would God, that Church did not too much fill our eie, yea the world; There is nothing wherein it doth more pride it ſelfe, than in a glorious conſpicuitie, ſcorning, in this regard, the obſcure paucitie of their oppoſers.

But you ſay, What is this but to play with ambiguities, That the Church of Rome is it ſelfe, that is, a Church; that it is viſible; that it is truly exiſtent, there can be no doubt; but is it ſtill a part of the truly exiſtent, viſible church of Chriſt? Surely, no otherwiſe than *Ob.* *Reſp.*

than an hereticall and Apoſtaticall Church is, and may be: Reader, whoſoever thou art, for Gods ſake, for thy ſoules ſake, marke where thou treadeſt; Elſe thou ſhalt bee ſure to fall either into an open gulfe of uncharitableneſſe, or into a dangerous precipice of errour. There is no feare, nor favour to ſay, that the Church of Rome, under a Chriſtian face, hath an Antichriſtian heart; overturning that foundation by neceſſarie inferences, which by open profeſſion in avoweth: That face, that profeſſion, thoſe avowed principles are enough to give it claime to a true outward viſibilitie of a Chriſtian Church; whiles thoſe damnable inferences are enough to feoffe it in the true ſtyle

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of hereſie, and Antichriſtianiſme; Now, this hereſie, this Antichriſtianiſme makes Rome juſtly odious, and execrable to God, to Angels, and Men; but cannot utterly diſchurch it, whiles thoſe main principles maintaine a weake life in that crazie, and corrupted bodie.

But is not this language different from that whereto our eares and eies have beene inured, from the mouthes, and pens of ſome reverend Divines and profeſſors of our Church? Know, Reader, that the ſtreame of the famous Doctors, both at home, and abroad, hath runne ſtrongly my way: I ſhould have feared, and hated to goe alone; what reaſon is there then to ſingle out one man

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in a throng? Some few worthie Authors have ſpoken otherwiſe, in the warmth of their zealous contention; yet ſo, as that even to them durſt I appeale for my Iudges; for if their ſound differ from me, their ſenſe agrees with me: that, which as I touched in my Advertiſement, ſo I am now readie to make cleare by the inſtance of learned *Zanchius*; whoſe pregnant teſtimonies compared together, ſhall plainly teach us, how eaſie a reconcilement may bee made betwixt theſe two, ſeemingly-contrarie, opinions: That worthie Author, in his profeſſion of Chriſtian Religion, which hee wrote, and publiſhed, in the 70. yeare of his age, having defined the Church of Chriſt in generall,

and

and paſſed thorow the properties of it, at laſt, deſcending to the ſubdiviſion of the Church militant, comes to inquire, how particular Churches may be knowne to be the true churches of Chriſt, wherof he determines thus. *Illas igitur, &c.* Thoſe Churches therefore doe wee acknowledge for the true Churches of Chriſt; in which firſt of all, the pure doctrine of the Goſpell is preached, heard, admitted; and ſo onely admitted, that there is neither place, nor eare given to the contrarie: For both theſe are the juſt propertie of the flocke or ſheepe of Chriſt; namely, both to heare the voice of their owne Paſtor, and to reject the voice of ſtrangers. *Iohn* 10. 4. In which, ſecondly, the Sacraments

inſtituted by Chriſt, are lawfully, and (as much as may bee) according to Chriſts inſtitution, adminiſtred, and received; and therefore, in which the Sacraments deviſed by men are not admitted, and allowed. In which laſtly, the diſcipline of Chriſt hath the due place; that is, where both publiquely, and privately, charitable care is had, both by admonitions, corrections, and at laſt (if need be) by excommunications; that the Commandements of God be duly kept, and that all perſons live ſoberly, iuſtly, and piouſly, to the glory of God, and edification of their neighbour. Thus hee; wherein, who ſees not how directly he aymes, both at the juſtifying of our Churches, and the ca-

caſheering of the Roman, which is palpably guiltie of the violation of thoſe wholſome rules? And indeed, it muſt needes be ſaid, if we bring the Roman Church to this touch, ſhe is caſt for a meer counterfeit; ſhee is as farre from truth, as truth is from falſhood: Now by this time you goe away with an opinion that learned *Zanchie* is my profeſſed adverſarie, and hath directly condemned my poſition, of the trueneſſe, and viſibilitie of the Roman Church: Have but patience, I beſeech you, to read what the ſame excellent Author writes, in his golden Preface to that noble worke, *De natura Dei*, where this queſtion is clearly, & punctuall decided: There you ſhall finde, that having paſſed

through the wofull and gloomie offuſcations of the Church of God, in all former ages, he, deſcribing to the darkneſſe of the preſent Babylon, concludes thus: *Deinde non potuit Satan, &c.* Moreover, Satan could not, in the verie Roman Church, doe what he liſted, as hee had done in the Eaſterne; to bring all things to ſuch paſſe, as that it ſhould no more have the forme of a Chriſtian Church; For, in ſpight of Satan, that Church retained ſtill the chief foundations of the faith, although weakned with the doctrines of men; it retained the publique preaching of the word of God, though in many places miſ-underſtood, and miſ-conſtrued; the invocation of the name of Chriſt, though joyned

joyned alſo with the invocation of dead men; the adminiſtration of Baptiſme, inſtituted by Chriſt himſelfe, howſoever defiled with the addition of many ſuperſtitions. So as, together with the ſymbole of the covenant, the Covenant it ſelfe remained ſtill in her; I meane in all the Churches of the Weſt, no otherwiſe than it did in the Church of Iſrael, even after that all things were in part profaned by *Ieroboam*, and other impious, and Idolatrous Kings, upon the defection made by them from the Church, and Tribe of *Iuda*; For, neither doe I aſſent to them which would have the Church of Rome to have no leſſe ceaſed to be the Church of Chriſt, than thoſe Eaſterne Churches, which

afterwards turned Mahumetan; what Church was ever more corrupt than the Church of the ten Tribes, yet we learne from the Scriptures, that it was ſtill the Church of God? And how doth S. *Paul* call that Church, where in Antichriſt (hee ſaith) ſhall ſit, the Temple of God? neither is it any Baptiſme at all, that is adminiſtred out of the Church of Chriſt. The wife that is an Adultereſſe, doth not ceaſe to be a wife, unleſſe being deſpoiled of her mariage-ring, ſhe be manifeſtly divorced: The Church of Rome, therefore, is yet the Church of *Chriſt*; but what manner of Church? Surely ſo corrupted and depraved, and with ſo great tyrannie oppreſſed, that you can neither, with a good con-

conſcience, partake with them, in their holy things, nor ſafely dwell amongſt them. Thus he againe; Wherein you ſee hee ſpeakes as home for me, as I could deviſe to ſpeake for my ſelfe: and as appoſitely profeſſeth to oppoſe the contrarie.

Looke, now how this learned Author may be reconciled to his owne pen; and by the very ſame way, ſhall my pen bee reconciled with others: Either he agrees not with himſelfe, or elſe, in his ſenſe, I agree with my gainſayers: Nothing is more plaine, then that hee in that former ſpeech, and all other claſſicke Authors, that ſpeake in that Key, meane, by a *True Church*, a ſound, pure, right beleeving Church; ſo as their *vera* is

Ibid. præfat. de nat. Dei.

rather *verax*: *Zanchie* explicates the terme, whiles he joines *veram & puram* together; ſo as in this conſtruction it is no true Church that is an unſound one; as if truth of exiſtence were all one with truth of doctrine: In this ſenſe, whoſoever ſhall ſay the Church of Rome is a true Church, I ſay he calls evill good, and is no better than a teacher of lyes. But, if we meaſure the true being of a viſible Church, by the direct maintenance of fundamentall principles, though by conſequences indirectly overturned, and by the poſſeſſion of the word of God, and his Sacraments, though not without foule adulteration; what judicious Chriſtian can but, with mee, ſubſcribe to learned *Zanchius*, that the

the Church of Rome hath yet the true visibilitie of a Church of Christ: what should I need to press the latitude, and multiplicity of sense of the word, *Church*, there is no one term that I know, in all use of speech, so various. If, in a large sense, it be taken to comprehend the society of all that professe Christian Religion, through the whole world, howsoever impured, who can denie this title to the Roman? If, in a strict sense, it be taken (as it is by *Zanchius* here, and all those Divines who refuse to give this style to the Synagogue of Rome) for the companie of elect faithfull men gathered into one mysticall bodie under one head, *Christ*, washed by his blood, justified by his merits, sanctified by

by his Spirit, conscionable waiting upon the true ordinances of God, in his pure Word, and holie Sacraments, who can be so shameless, as to give this title to the Roman Church? Both these sentences, then, are equally true; *The Church of Rome is yet a true Church in the first sense; The Church of Rome long since ceased to bee a true Church in the second.* As those friendly souldiers therefore, of old, said to their fellowes (τί μαχόμεθα?) why fight we? Stay, stay, deare brethren, for Gods sake, for his Churches sake, for your soules sake, stay these busie and unprofitable litigations; put up, on both sides, your angrie pens; Turne your Swords into Sithes, to cut downe the ranke corruptions of the Roman church;

and your Speares into Mattockes, to beat downe the walls of this mysticall Babylon. There are enemies enough abroad, Let us bee friends at home. But if your sense be the same, you will aske, why our termes vary, and why wee have chosen to fall upon that maner of expression, which gives aduantage to the Aduersarie, offence to our owne? Christian Reader, let me beseech thee, in the bowels of Christ, to weigh well this matter, and then tell me why such offence, such aduantage should bee rather given by my words, than by the same words, in the mouth of *Luther*, of *Calvin*, of *Zanchie*, *Iunius*, *Plessee*, *Hooker*, *Andrewes*, *Field*, *Crakenthorpe*, *Bedel*, and that whole cloud of learned and pi-

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ous Authors, who have, without exceptiō, uſed the ſame language? And why more by my words, now, than twentie yeares agoe, at which time I publiſhed the ſame truth, in a more ful and liberall expreſſion. Wiſe and charitable Chriſtians may not be apt to take offence where none is given. As for anie Advantage that is hereby given to the Adverſaries, they may put it in their eye, and ſee never the worſe. Loe; ſay they, we are of the true viſible Church; this is enough for us; why are we forſaken, why are we prefecuted, why are we ſolicited to change? Alas; poore ſoules, doe they not know, that Hypocrites, leud perſons, reprobates, are no leſſe members of the true viſible Church?

what

what gaine they by this but a deeper damnation? To what purpose did the Iewes crie, *The Temple of the Lord*, whiles they despighted the Lord of that Temple? Is the sea-weed ever the lesse vile, because it is dragd vp together with good fish? They are of the visible Church, such as it is; what is this but to say, they are neither Iewes, nor Turkes, nor Pagans, but misbeleevers, damnablie heretically in opinion, shamefullie idolatrous in practice; Let them make their best of this just Elogie, and triumph in this style, may we never prosper if we envie them this glorie: Our care shall be, that, besides the Church sensible, (as *Zuinglius* distinguisheth) we may be of the Church spirituall, and not resting

Epist. 2. resp. ad Catabapt.

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in a fruitlesse visibilitie, wee may finde our selves livelie limbes of the mystical body of *Christ*; which onelie condition shall give us a true right to heaven; whiles fashionable profession, in vaine cries, *Lord, Lord*, and is barred out of those blessed gates, with an, *I know you not.*

Neither may the Reader think, that I affect to goe by-waies of speech: no, I had not taken this path, unlesse I had found it both more beaten, and fairer. I am not so unwise, to teach the Adversarie what disadvantage I conceive to be given to our most just cause, by the other manner of explication. Let it suffice to say, that this form of defence more fully stops the adversaries mouth in those two maine

maine and envious ſcandals, wherewith hee caſts upon our holy Religion, Defection from the Church, and Innovation; than which, no ſuggeſtion hath wont to bee more prevalent with weake, and ungrounded hearts, what we further win by this, not more charitable, than ſaid Tenet, I had rather it ſhould bee ſilently conceived by the judicious, then blazoned by my free penne; ſhortly, in this ſtate of the queſtion, our gaine is as cleare, as the Adverſaries loſſe: our ancient Truth triumphes over their upſtart errours, our charitie over their mercileſſe preſumptions; Feare not therefore, deare brethren, where there is on roome for danger; Suſpect

not

not fraud where there is nothing but plaine, honeſt, ſimplicitie of intentions; cenſure not where there is the ſame Truth, clad in a different, but more eaſie habite of words; But if any mans fervent zeale ſhall rather draw him to the liking of that other, rougher, and harder way, ſo as in the meane time he keepe within the bounds of Chriſtian charitie, I taxe him not; let everie man abound in his owne ſenſe; Onely let our hearts, and tongues, and hands, conſpire together in peace with our ſelves, in warre with our common enemies.

Thus farre have I (Right Honourable) in a deſire of peace, poured out my ſelfe into a plaine explication, and eaſie accordance: Thoſe

Thoſe whom I ſtrive to ſatisfie, are onely miſ-takers; whoſe cenſures, if ſome man would have either laught out, or deſpiſed, yet I have condeſcended to take off by a ſerious deprecation, and juſt defence.

It is an vnreaſonable motion to requeſt mindes prepoſſeſſed with prejudice to heare reaſon; Whole Volumes are nothing to ſuch as have contented themſelves onely to take up opinions upon truſt, and will hold them, becauſe they know where they had them: In vaine ſhould I ſpend my ſelfe in beating upon ſuch anviles; but for thoſe ingenuous Chriſtians, which will hold an eare open for juſtice, and truth, I have ſaid enough, if ought at all needed.

Alas, my Lord, I see and grieve to see it, it is my Rochet that hath offended, and not I; In another habit, I, long since, published this, and more, without dislike; It is this colour of innocence that hath bleared some over-tender eyes. Wherein I know not whether I should more pittie their errour, or applaud my owne sufferings, although I may not say with the Psalmist, *What hath the righteous done?* Let mee (I beseech your Lordship) upon this occasion, have leave to give a little vent to my just griefe in this point.

The other day I fell upon a Latine Pamphlet, homely for style, tedious for length, zealously uncharitable for stuffe, wherein the Author (onely wise in this,

that

that he would bee unknowne) in a grave fiercenesse flies in the face of our Englisſh Prelacie; not ſo much enveighing againſt their Perſons, (which he could be content to reverence) as their verie places. I bleſt my ſelfe to ſee the caſe ſo altered: Heretofore, the Perſon had wont to beare off manie blowes from the function; now the verie function wounds the perſon: In what caſe are we, when that which ſhould command reſpect, brands us? What blacke Art hath raiſed up this ſpirit of *Ærius* from his pit? Wo is mee, that zeale ſhould breed ſuch monſters of conceit: It is the honour, the Pompe, the wealth, the pleaſure (hee ſaith) of the Epiſcopall Chaire that is guil-

tie of the depravation of our Calling; and if himſelfe were ſo overlayd with greatneſſe, hee ſhould ſuſpect his owne fidelitie. Alas, poore man, at what diſtance doth hee ſee us? Foggie Ayre uſeth to repreſent everie object farre bigger than it is. Our Sauiour in his temptation upon the Mount, had onely the glorie of thoſe Kingdomes ſhowed to him, by that ſubtile Spirit, not the cares, and vexations; Right ſo are our dignities exhibited to theſe envious beholders; Little doe theſe men ſee the toyles, and anxieties that attend this ſuppoſedly-pleaſing eminence.

All the revenge that I would wiſh to this uncharitable Cenſurer, ſhould bee this, that hee might

might bee but for a while adjudged to this ſo glorious ſeate of mine; that ſo his experience might taſte the bewitching pleaſures of this envied greatneſſe; hee ſhould well finde more danger of being over-ſpent with worke, than of languiſhing with eaſe & delicacie.

For mee I need not appeale to Heaven: Eyes enow can witneſſe how few free houres I have enjoyed, ſince I put on theſe Robes of ſacred honour. In ſo much as I could finde in my heart, with holy *Gregorie*, to complaine of my change; were it not, that I ſee theſe publique troubles are ſo many acceptable ſervices to my God, whoſe glorie is the end of my being: Certainly, my Lord, if none but earthly reſpects ſhould

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ſway me, I ſhould heartily wiſh to change this Pallace (which the Providence of God, and the bountie of my gracious Soveraigne hath put mee into) for my quiet Cell at *Waltham*, where I had ſo ſweet leaſure to enjoy God, your Lordſhip, and my ſelfe: But I have followed the calling of my God, to whoſe ſervice I am willingly ſacrificed; and muſt now, in an holy obedience to his Divine Majeſtie, with what cheerefulneſſe I may, ride out all the ſtormes of envie, which unavoidably will alight vpon the leaſt appearance of a conceived greatneſſe; in the meane time, whatever I may ſeeme to others, I was never leſſe in my owne apprehenſions; and, were it not for this

this attendance of envie, could not yeeld my ſelfe any whit greater than I was; what ever I am, that good God of mine, make mee faithfull to him; and compoſe the unquiet ſpirits of men, to a conſcionable care of the publique peace; with which prayer, together with the apprecation of all happineſſe to your Lordſhip, and all yours, I take leave and am

Your Lordſhips truly devoted in all hearty obſervance and dutie,

IOS. EXON.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER Wisedome and Charitie.

IT is no easie matter for a man so far to mortifie his self-love, as to neglect himselfe for the publique good; & to vaile his private ingagements (though with some seeming disadvantage) to the peace of the Church; that which

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is too apparent in the preſent occaſion. Whiles there might be ſome colour of ambiguitie of termes, and poſsibilitie of miſconſtruction, in that Poſition concerning the true being, and viſibility of the Roman church; I could the leſſe marvell that a miſtaking ſhould breed a quarrell; but now, after ſo clear an explication, as I have given of my ſenſe, and ſo ſatisfactory a reconcilement, as no ingenuous Chriſtian can except againſt; I am not a little troubled to ſee the peace of the church yet diſquieted with perſonall,

ſonall, and unkinde diſſertations.

Surely (what ever may bee pretended) not one haire of any Chriſtians head can be indangered, in that aſſertion of mine (yet not ſo much mine, as the moſt of the reformed Divines of Chriſtendome) as it is by them, and me both underſtood, and interpreted; ſince we call all Chriſtians to no leſſe deteſtation of the abhominable corruptiõs, & Idolatries of the Roman Church, notwithſtanding the yeeldance of a bootleſſe viſibilitie, then thoſe that

deny

deny it the being, and name of a Church: yea wee raiſe more ſtrong advantage againſt the adverſary by this grant, then by that deny all.

Neyther is here the leaſt contradiction to any clauſe of the Articles of our Church, of England, in that ſenſe wherein I have delivered my ſelfe; ſuch is my true filiall honor to that our holy Mother, that I ſhould hate my ſelfe, if I ſhould offer to oppoſe any of her ſacred dictates; how ever it may ſound to an ignorant eare.

In every oppoſition there muſt

must be supposed the same subject, the same respect, the same understanding of both; Else how ever the words run, the matter disagrees not. For example; If one man shall say, The Church is visible, materiall, consisting of lime and stone; Another shall say, The Church is invisible, immateall, not consisting of any earthly stuffe; these two doe not contradict each other; whiles the one speakes of the outward fabricke of the Church; the other of the spirituall state of the Church; Neyther is it other-

otherwise in my assertion, and that which is counter-alledged from the Articles or Homilies of the Church; as I have sufficiently explained my sense both in my Advertisement, and Reconciler; It is not for me to cloy my Reader with repetitions.

Now, lest I might perhaps seeme partiall to my own cause, and flatter my selfe in my own opinion; I have craved the judgement of some, of the most eminent & approved Divines of our Church, & the French; whose names are justly reverend,

rend; whose workes have made thē famous in our gates: I have of many hundreds, selected only foure; *two Bishops, and two Doctors; such, as whose very mētion is able to stop the mouth of calumny; and to make ignorance ashamed of it selfe. I have taken the boldnes to publish their private Letters in answer to mine. Peruse them, Reader, and take satisfaction; and confesse it was thy mistaking, and not my errour that made me appeare foule: Farewell, and love peace, and the God of peace be with thee.

F. E.

*B. Morton of Cov. and Lichfield. B. Dauenant of Salisbury Dr. Prideaux of Oxford. Dr. Primerose Preacher of the French Church.

To the Right Reuerend Father in God, THOMAS, *Lord Biſhop of Couentree* and *Lichfield.*

MY Lord; *may your leaſure ſerue you to read ouer this poore ſheete of Paper, and to cenſure it: Your name is left out in the Catalogue of ſome other famous Diuines, mentioned in the body of it, that you might not be foreſtalled. I ſuffer*

for that wherein your ſelfe, amongſt many renowmed Orthodoxe Doctors of the Church, are my partner; As if you had not already ſaid it enough; I beſeech your Lordſhip ſay, once more, what you thinke of the true being, and viſibilitie of the Romane Church, Your excellent and zealous writings haue iuſtly won you a conſtant reputation of great learning, and no leſſe ſinceritie, and haue placed you out of the reach of ſuſpicion; No man can, no man dare

dare miſ-doubt your deciſi-
on; If you find any one
word amiſſe in this explica-
tion, ſpare me not; I ſhall
gladly kiſſe your rod; and
hold your vtmoſt ſeueritie a
fauour; But if you here
meete with no other then
the words of a commonly
profeſſed truth; acquit me
ſo farre as to ſay, there is no
reaſon I ſhould ſuffer alone;
And let the wilfull, or igno-
rant miſ-takers know that
they wound innocencie, and,
through my ſids, ſtrike their
beſt friends. I ſhould not

herein desire you to tender my fame, if the iniurie done to my name did not reflect vpon my holy station, vpon my wel-meant labours, vpon almost all the famous, and wel-deseruing Authors that haue stood for the truth of God; and lastly if I did not see this miſ-taken quarrell to threaten much preiudice to the Church of God; whoſe Peace is no leſſe deare to vs both, then our liues; In earneſt desire, and hope of some few satisfactorie lines from your Reuerend

rend hand, in anſwere to this, my bold, yet iuſt, ſuit, I take leaue, and am

Your much deuo-

ted and louing

Brother,

Ios. Exon.

To the Right Reuerend Father in God, my verie good *Lord and Brother* IOSEPH *Lord Bishop of Exon, these.*

RIght Reuerend, and as dearely beloued Brother, I haue (I confesse) beene too long in your Lordships debt for these Letters; which are now to Apologize for me, that although I had my payment

ment ready, and *in numeratis* at the first reading of your Reconciler, yet I reserued my Answere vntill I had perused the two other Bookes and seconds, that so I might returne my payment *cum fœnore.*

In that your Lordships Tractate, I could not but obserue the liuely Image of your selfe; that is (according to the generall interpretation of all sound professors of the Gospell of Christ) of a most

moſt Orthodoxe Diuine; And now remembring the Accordance your Lordſhip hath with others touching the Argument of your Booke, I muſt needes reflect vpon my ſelfe, who haue long ſince defended the ſame point, in the defence of many others. I do therefore much blame the Petulcitie of whatſoeuer author that ſhould dare to impute a Popiſh affection to him, whome (beſides his excellent wri-

tings

tings and Sermons) Gods visible, eminent, and resplendent Graces of Illumination, zeale, pietie & eloquence haue made truely Honourable and glorious in the Church of Christ. Let me say no more, I suffer in your suffering, not more in consonancie of iudgement then in the sympathie of my affection. Goe on deare Brother with your deserued Honor in Gods Church with holy courage, knowing that the dirtie

dirtie feete of an Aduerſarie, the more they tread, and rubbe, the more luſtre they giue the figure grauen in Gold. Our Lord Ieſus preſerue vs to the glorie of his ſauing grace.

Your Lordſhips vnanimous friend and Brother,

THO: *Couent. and Lichfield.*

To the Right Reuerend Father in God, IOHN, *Lord Bishop of Salisburie.*

MY Lord, I send you this little Pamphlet for your censure; It is not credible how strangely I haue beene traduced euerie where, for that, which I conceiue to be the common opinion of reformed Diuines, yea of reasonable men; that is, for affirming

ming the true being and visibilitie of the Romane Church, You see how clearely I haue endeauored to explicate this harmelesse position; yet I perceiue some tough mis-vnderstandings will not bee satisfied; Your Lordship hath with great reputation spent manie yeares in the Diuinitie-Chaire of the famous Vniuersitie of Cambridge. Let me therefore beseech you, whose Learning, and sinceritie is so throughly approued in Gods Church, that you

you would freely (how shortly so euer) expresse your selfe in this point; and, if you find that I haue deuiated, but one hayre-breadth from the Truth, correct me; If not, free me by your iust sentence: What need I intreat you to pittie those, whose desires of faithfull offices to the Church of God are vnthankefully repayed with suspicion, and sclaunder; whose may not this case be? I had thought I had sufficiently in all my writings, and in this verie last

Booke

Booke of mine (whence this quarrell is picked) showed my feruent zeale for Gods truth against that Antichrian faction of Rome, and yet I doubt not but your owne eares can witnesse what I haue suffered. Yea as if this calumnie were not enough, there want not those whose secret whisperings cast vpon mee the foule aspersions of another Sect, whose name is as much hated, as little vnderstood, My Lord, you know I had a place with you (though vn-

vnworthy) in that famous Sinod of DROT, where (howsoeuer sickneſſe bereaued me of the houres of a concluſiue ſubſcription) yet, your Lordſhip heard me, with equall vehemencie to to the reſt, ſwaying downe the vnreaſonableneſſe of that way: I am ſtill the ſame man, and ſhall liue and die in the ſuffrage of that Reuerend Synod; and doe confidently auow, that thoſe other oppoſed opinions cannot ſtand with the Doctrine of the Church of England.

land. But if for the compoſing of the differences at home (which your Lordſhip knowes to be farre different from Netherlandiſh) there could haue beene tendred any ſuch faire propoſitions of accordance, as might bee no preiudice to Gods truth, I ſhould haue thought it an holy, and happie proiect, wherein, if it be not a fault to haue wiſhed a ſafe peace, I am innocent. God ſo loue me as I doe the tranquilitie and happineſſe of his Church; yet can I not ſo ouer-

ouer-affect it that I would sacrifice one dram of Truth to it. To that good God doe I appeale as the witnesse of my sincere heart to his whole Truth, and no lesse then e-uer zealous detestation of al Poperie, & Pelagianisme. Your Lordship will be pleased to pardon this importunitie, and to vouchsaue your speedy answere, to

Your much deuoted and faithfull Brother,

Ios. Exon.

MY Lord, you desire my opinion concerning an assertion of yours, wherat some have taken offence. The proposition was this. [That the *Romane* Church remaynes yet a True Visible Church.] The occasion which makes this an ill sounding proposition in the eares of Protestants (especially such as are not throughly acquainted with Schoole Distinctions) is the vsuall acception of the Word, True, in our English tongue. For though men

men skilled in Metaphysickes hold it for a maxime, *Ens, Verum, Bonum conuertuntur:* yet with vs, he which shall affirme, Such an one is a True Christian, a True Gentleman, a True Scholler, a True Souldier, or the like; hee is conceiued not only to adscribe Trueneſſe of Beeing vnto all theſe, but thoſe Due Qualities, or Requiſite Actions wherby they are made commendable or Praiſe-worthy in their ſeuerall kinds. In this ſenſe the *Roman* Church is no more a True Church in reſpect of Chriſt, or thoſe due Qualities, and proper Actions which Chriſt requires; then an arrant whore is a True and loyall Wife vnto her Husband I

durſt vpon mine oath be one of your Compurgators, that you neuer intended to adorne that Strumpet with the Title of a True Church in this meaning. But your owne Writings haue ſo fully cleered you herein; that Suſpition it ſelfe, cannot reaoſnably ſuſpect you in this point. I therefore can ſay no more concerning your miſtaken propoſition then this. If in that treatiſe wherein it was deliuered; the Antecedents, or Conſequents were ſuch, as ſerued fitly to leade the Reader into that Senſe, which vnder the word True, comprehendeth only Truth of Beeing or Exiſtencie, and not the Due Qualities of the thing or ſubiect;

iect; you haue beene cauſeleſly traduced. But on the other ſide, if that Propoſition comes in *ex abrupto*, or ſtands ſolitarie in your diſcourſe, you cannot maruell though by taking the word True according to the more ordinarie acception, your true meaning was miſtaken. In briefe, your Propoſition admits a True ſenſe; & in that ſenſe, is by the beſt learned in our Reformed Church, not diſallowed. For The Beeing of a Church does principally ſtand vpon the Gratious Action of God, calling men out of Darkneſſe and Death, vnto the Participation of ſight and life in Chriſt Ieſus. So long as God continues this Calling

vnto any people, though they (as much as in them lies) Darken this light, and corrupt the meanes which ſhould bring them to life and ſaluation in Chriſt; yet where God Calls men vnto the Participation of life in Chriſt, by the word & by the Sacraments, there is the true Being of a Chriſtian Church; let men bee neuer ſo falſe in their Expoſitions of GODS Word, or neuer ſo vntruſtie in mingling their owne Traditions with Gods Ordinances. Thus the Church of the *Iewes* loſt not her Being of a Church, when ſhee became an Idolatrous Church. And thus vnder the gouernment of the Scribes and Phariſees, who voided the Com-

Commandements of God by their owne Traditions; there was yet ſtanding a true Church in which *Zacharias*, *Elizabeth*, the Virgin *Mary*, and our Sauiour himſelfe was borne, who were mẽbers of that Church, and yet participated not in the corruptions thereof. Thus to grant that the Roman was, and is a True Viſible Chriſtian Church, (though in doctrine a falſe, and in practice an Idolatrous Church) is a true aſſertion, and of greater vſe and neceſſitie in our Controuerſie with Papiſts about the Perpetuitie of the Chriſtian Church, then is vnderſtood by thoſe who gainſay it. This in your Reconciler is ſo wel explicated,

as if any shall continue in traducing you, in regard of that Proposition, so explained: I thinke it wil be only those who are better acquainted with wrangling, then reasoning, and deeper in loue with strife, then truth: As for the aspersion of Arminianisme, I can testifie that in our ioint imployment at the Synod of *Dort*, you were as farre from it, as my selfe. And I know that no man can imbrace it in the Doctrine of Predestination, and Grace, but he must first desert the Articles agreed vpon by the Church of *England*, nor in the point of perseuerance, but he must vary from the common Tenet, and receiued opinion of our best ap-

approued Doctors in the English Church. I am assured that you neither haue deserted the one, nor will vary from the other. And therefore be no more troubled with other mens groundlesse suspitions, then you would be in like case, with their idle Dreames. Thus I haue inlarged my selfe beyond my first intent. But my loue to your selfe, and the assurance of your constant loue vnto the Truth, inforced me thereunto. I rest alwayes

Ian 30. 1628.

Your louing Brother

Io. SARVM.

¶ To the Reuerend and learned, Master Doctor PREDEAVX, *professor of Diuinitie in Oxford*, and Rector of EXCETER Colledge.

WOrthy Master Doctor Predeaux: *All our litle world here, takes notice of your worth, and eminencie; who haue long furnished the Diuinitie Chaire in that famous Vniuersitie, with mutuall grace and honour.*

nour. Let me intreate you, vpon the peruſall of this ſorie ſheete of Paper, to impart your ſelfe freely to me, in your cenſure; and to expreſſe to mee your cleare iudgement, concerning the true being, and viſibilitie of the Romane Church; you ſee in what ſence I profeſſe to hold it; neither was any other euer in my thoughts; Say, I beſeech you, whether you thinke any learned Orthodoxe Diuine can, with any colour of reaſon, maintaine a contradiction hereynto

vnto; And if you find (as I doubt not) much neceſsitie and vſe of this true, and ſafe Tenet; helpe me to adde (if you pleaſe) a further ſupplie of Antidotes to thoſe Popiſh ſpiders, that would faine ſucke poyſon out of this herbe. It was my earneſt deſire that this ſatisfactorie reconcilement might haue ſtilled all tongues, and pens, concerning this ill-rayſed brabble: but I ſee to my griefe, how much men care for themſelues more, then peace; I ſuffer, and the

Church

Church is disquieted; your learning and grauitie will be ready to contribute to a seasonable pacification; In desire, and exspectation of your speedie answere, I take my leaue, and am

Your very louing

friend, and fellow-

labourer,

Ios. Exon.

Right Reuerend Father in GOD;

VPon the receite of your Reconciler, which it pleaſed you to ſend me, I tooke occaſion (as my manifolde diſtractions would permit) to peruſe what had beene ſaid on both ſides, concerning the now-being of the Romane Church. Wherin I muſt profeſſe, that I could

could not but wonder at the needleſſe exceptions againſt your Tenet; you affirming no new thing in that paſſage miſliked in your Old Religion. And this your Aduertiſement (afterward) ſo fully and punctually cleareth, and your Reconciler ſo acquitteth, with ſuch ſatiſfying ingenuitie, that I cannot imagin they haue conſidered it well, or meane wel, that ſhal perſiſt to oppoſe it. For who perceiues not, that your

Lord-

Lordship leaues no more to Rome, then our best Diuines euer since the Reformation haue granted? If their speeches haue beene sometimes seemingly different, their meaning hath beene alwayes the same; that in respect of the common Truths yet professed among the Papists they may, and ought to bee tearmed, a True visible Church, in opposition to Iewes, Turkes, and Pagans, who directly denie the

the Foundation, howſoeuer their Antichriſtian aditions make them no better then the Synagogue of Sathan. This being agreed vpon by thoſe, whoſe Iudgement wee haue good reaſon to follow (cited in your Aduertiſement, and by others) they doe an ill office to our Church (in my opinion) who ſet them at ods in this point, that are ſo excellently reconciled; and giue more aduantage to the Aduer-

 ſarie

ſarie by quarrelling with our worthies, then the Aduerſarie is like to get by our acknowledgment, that they are ſuch a miſerable Church, as we diſcouer them to be. VVhat I haue thought long ſince in this behalfe, it appeareth in my Lecture *De Viſibilitate Eccleſiæ*; and as often as this hath come in queſtion in our publicke Diſputes, we determine here no otherwiſe, then your Lordſhip hath ſtated it. And yet wee truſt

truſt to giue as little vantage to Poperie, as thoſe that doe deteſt it; and are as circumſpect to maintaine our receiued Doctrine and Diſcipline without the leaſt ſcandall to the weakeſt, as thoſe that would ſeeme moſt forward. That diſtinction of Romes caſe before, and ſince, the Councell of *Trent*, holds not to diſ-Church it, but ſhewes it rather to be more incureable now, then heretofore Neither find I any parti-

culars obiected, which those worthy men haue not sufficiently cleared, that haue iustifyed your Assertion. Not to trouble therefore your weightier affairs with my needlesse interposition; As that controuersie about the Altar (*Iosuah* 22.) had presently a faire end vpon the ful vnderstanding of the good meaning on both sides, so I trust in God this shall haue: In which I am so perswaded that if it were to bee discussed

cuſſed there after our Scholaſticall manner, it might well bee defended either *pro*, or *con*, with out preiudice to the Truth, according to the full ſtating, which your Aduertiſement, and Reconciler haue afforded. And thus, with tender of my due obſeruance, and Prayers for your happineſſe, I reſt

Your Lordſhips in Chriſt
to be commanded,

Io. Prideaux.

From Exon Coll. Marij 9. No.

¶ To my Reuerend and learned friend M. Doctor PRIMEROSE, *Preacher to the* French Church in LONDON.

WOrthy Master Doctor Primerose, *you haue beene long acknowledged a great light in the Reformed Churches of France, hauing, for many yeeres, shined in your orbe, the famous Church of* Burdeaux, *with*

with notable effects, and singular approbation both for iudgment and sinceritie; both which also your learned writings haue well approued; So as your sentence cannot be liable to the danger of any suspition. Let me intreate you to declare freely what you hold concerning the trueneſſe, and visibilitie of the Romane Church, as it is by me explicated; And, with all, to impart your knowledg of the common Tenet of thoſe foraine Diuines, with whom you haue

so

so long conuerſed, concerning this point; which (if I miſtake not) onely a ſtubburne ignorance will needs make litigious. It grieues my Soule to ſee the peace of the Church troubled with ſo abſurd a meſ priſon; In exſpectation of your anſwer, I take leaue, and commend you, and your holy labours to the bleſſing of our God. Farewell; from

Your louing Brother,
and fellow-labourer
Ios. Exon.

To the Right Reuerend Father in God, and my very good Lord, IOSEPH Bishop of *Exceter*.

Right Reuerend Father in God,

I Haue beene so busied about my necessarie studies for preaching on Sunday, Tuesday, and this Thursday, that I could not giue sooner a full answer to your Lordships Letter, which I receiued on Friday last at night, whereby I am desired to declare freely

ly what I think concerning the trueneſſe and viſibilitie of the preſent *Roman* Church, as it is by your Lordſhip explicated, and what is the common tenet of the forraine Diuines, with whom I haue ſo long conuerſed beyond the Seas, concerning that point. I might anſwere in two lines, that I haue read your Reconciler, and iudge your opinion concerning that point to be learned, ſound, and true. Though that if I durſt fauour an officious lie, I would willingly giue my Suffrage to thoſe Diuines which out of a moſt feruent zeale to God, and perfect hatred to Idolatry, hold that the *Roman* Church is in all things BABEL, in nothing BETHEL. And as they which

ſeeke

seeke to set right a crooked tree, bow it the cleane contrary way to make it streight, so to recouer and pull out of the fire of eternall damnation, the *Roman* Christians, I would gladly pourtray them with sable colours, and make their religion more black in their owne eyes, then they are in ours the hellish coloured faces of the flat-nosed *Ethiopians*, or to the *Spaniard* the monstrous *Sambenito* of the Iniquisition.

But fearing the true reproch cast by *Iob* in his friends teeth, [a] *Will you speake wickedly for God, and talke deceitfully for him?* and knowing that we must not speake a lie, no not against the Deuill which is the Father of lies, I say that the *Roman* Church

[a] *Iob* 13.7.

Church is both BABEL and BETHEL, and as *Gods Temple* was in Christs daies at once [b] *the house of Prayer*, and *a den of theeues*, so shee is in our dayes, [c] *Gods Temple*, and *the* [d] *habitation of Deuils, the hold of euery foule spirit, and a cage of euery vncleane, and hatefull bird*; which I proue thus.

b *Mat.* 24. 13.

c 2. *Thes.* 2. 4.

d *Reuel.* 18. 1, 2.

The Church is to be considered three manner of wayes. *First* according to Gods right which he keepeth ouer her, and maintaineth in her by the common and externall calling of his Word and Sacraments. *Secondly*, according to the pure preaching of the Word, and externall obedience in hearing, receiuing, and keeping the Word syncerely preached.

Thrdly,

Thirdly, according to the election of grace, and the personall calling, which hath perpetually the inward working of the Holy Ghost ioyned with the outward preaching of the Word, as in [c] *Lydia*. Thence commeth [f] *the answere of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

To begin with the last consideration, these only are Gods Church which are [g] *Iewes inwardly in the spirit*, aswell *as outwardly in the letter, whose prayse is not of men, but of God*, [h] who are *Nathaniels, and true Israelites, in whom there is no guile*: Inuisible to all men: Visible to God alone, [i] *who knoweth them that are his*, and each of them to themselues, because [k] *they haue re-*

c *Acts* 16.14.
f 1. *Pet.* 3.21.
g *Rom.* 2.28. 29.
h *Iohn* 1.
i 2. *Tim.* 2.19.
k 2. *Cor.* 2.12.

receiued the Spirit which is of God, that they might know the things which are freely giuen to them of God, and l *the white stone, which no man knoweth, saue the that receiueth it.* Of this Church called by the Apostle, *the people which God foreknew*, *Rom.* 11. there is no controuersie amongst our Diuines.

l *Reuel* 2 17.

In the second consideration, these onely are the true visible Church of God, amongst whom the Word of God is truly preached without the mixture of humane traditions, the holy Sacraments are celebrated according to their first institution, and the people consenteth to bee led and ruled by the Word of God. As when m Moses *laid before the faces of the*

m *Exod* 19 7, 8. *Exod.* 24. 3, 7.

the people all the words which the Lord commanded him, and all the people answered together, All *that the Lord hath spoken we will doe*, the Lord said vnto *Moses*, [n] *Write thou these words: For after the tenor of these words I haue made a couenant with thee, and with Israel*: And *Moses* said to the people, [o] *Thou hast auouched this day the Lord to bee thy thy God, & to walke in his wayes; and to keepe his Statutes, and his Commandements, and his Iudgements, & to harken vnto his voice: And the Lord hath auouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, & that thou shouldest keepe all his Commandements.* This condition of the Commandement GOD did often inculcate into their eares by

n *Exod.* 34.27.

o *Deut.* 26. 17,18.

by his Prophets. As when hee ſaid to them by *Ieremiah*,

p *Ier.7.23. Ier.11.4.* p *This thing commanded I them, ſaying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and yee ſhall bee my people, and walke yee in all the wayes, in that I haue commanded you, that it may bee well vnto you.*

So in the Goſpell, Chriſt

q *Iohn 10.27.* ſaith, q *My ſheepe heare my voice, and I know them, and they follow*

r *Iohn 10.7.* *me.* But r *a ſtranger will they not follow, but will flie from him: For they know not the voice of ſtrangers*: where he giueth the firſt marke of the viſibly true and pure Church, to wit, the pure preaching, and hearing of Chriſts voice. As likewiſe Saint

s *1.Iohn 4.6.* *Iohn* ſaith, s *He that knoweth God heareth vs: hereby know wee the Spirit of truth, and the ſpirit of errour.*

errour. Againe, the Lord saith, t *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye haue loue one to another*, pointing out the concord and holy agreement which is among the brethren, as another marke of the orthodoxe Church: As likewise when hee saith, u *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in Heauen*, hee sheweth that good workes are the visible mark of the true orthodoxe Church: The true preaching & reuerent hearing of the Gospel, is a visible mark of our faith and hope: Our concord in the Lord, is a marke of our Charitie: Our good workes are reall and sensible testimonies of our inward

t *Iohn* 13.35.

u *Matth.* 5.16.

Faith, Hope, and Charitie. Where wee finde these three signes, we know certainly that there is Christs true Church, and iudge *charitably*, that is probably, that euery one in whom wee see these outward tokens of Christs true and orthodoxe Church, is a true member of the mysticall body of the Lord Iesus. I say *charitably*, because outward markes may be outwardly counterfeited by Hypocrites, as it is said of Israel, [x] *They did flatter with their mouth, and they lyed vnto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Couenant*: And of many of these that followed our Sauiour, [y] *Many beleeued in his Name, when they saw*

x Ps. 78. 36. 37.

y Iohn 2. 23. 24.

saw the miracles which he did: But Iesus did not commit himselfe vnto them, because he knew all men.

Therefore when the people of Israel departed from the Couenant, and by their Idolatrie brake, as much as in them lay, the contract of marriage betweene them and God, they ceased in that behalfe, to bee Gods true Spouse and people, though still they called him their Husband and their God. When they made a molten Calfe in the Wildernesse, and worshipped the works of their owne fingers, God said to *Moses*, [a] *Thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, haue corrupted themselues, and not my people.* And *Moses* to shew that on their part they

[a] Exod 32.7.

had broken the Couenant,
b *broken the Tables of the Couenant*, when vnder *Achaz* they did worse, *Isaiah* called them
c *children that are corrupted*, their Prince and Gouernours, *Rulers of Sodome*, themselues *people of Gomorrah*, their holy Citie *an Harlot*: And God about the same time cried vnto them by *Micah*, d *Thou that art named the house of Iacob: Thou that wastest late my people*. And to the ten Tribes by *Hosea*, e *Yee are not my people, and I will not bee your God*: After the same manner Christ said to the Iewes, which gloried and made their boast that God was their Father, f *If God were your Father, yee would loue me: Yee are of your father the Deuill: And the lusts of your father yee will doe.*

b Exod. 32. 19.
c Esay 1. 4, 9.
d Micah. 2. 7, 8.
e Hosea 1. 10.
f Iohn 8. 42. 44.

If

If we speake of the Romish Church according to this distinction, defining the Church by the keeping of the Couenant in pureneſſe of doctrine, and holineſſe of life, God himſelfe hath ſtript her of that glorious Name, calling her [g] *ſpiritually Sodome, Egypt, and* [h] *Babylon. Sodome* in the pollution of her moſt filthy life; *Egypt* in the abominable multitude of her filthy Idols; *Babylon* in the cruell and bloudie oppreſſion and perſecution of the Saints. And becauſe ſhe was to cal her ſelfe as falſly as arrogantly *the mother Church*, the Angell calleth her THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH: Becauſe alſo ſhee was to bring

g *Reuel.* 11. 8.

h *Reuel.* 14. 8.

and magnifie her selfe in the multitude of her Saints, hee saith, that [i] *shee is drunke with the bloud of the Saints, and with the bloud of the Martyrs of Iesus.* And taking from her the name of the Church, which she challengeth priuatiuely to all other Christian congregations, hee nameth her, as I haue already said, [k] *the habitation of Deuils, the hold of euerie fonle spirit, and a Cage of euerie vncleane and hatefull bird.*

i Reuel. 17.5.6

k Reuel. 18.2.

In the first sence *Moses* said to God, *why doth thy wrath wax hote against* THY *people*; because although they had broken the Couenant on their part by the workes of their hands, God had not as yet broken it on his part. *Ieremiah* in the greateſt

l Exod. 32.11.

teſt heate of their monſtruous Idolatries prayed after the ſame maner, [m] *Doe not abhorre vs for thy Names ſake, doe not diſgrace the Throne of thy glorie: Remember, breake not thy Couenant with vs.* And *Eſaiah*, [n] *Thou art our Father, we are* ALL *thy people.* For ſo long as God cals a people to him by his word and Sacraments, and honoureth them with his name: So long alſo as they conſent to be called by his name, profeſſing it outwardly, they remaine his people, although they anſwere not his calling, neither in ſoundneſſe of faith, nor in holineſſe of life. Euen as rebellious Subiects are ſtill true Subiects on the Kings behalfe, who looſeth not his right by

m *Iere.* 14 21.

n *Eſa.* 64.8,9.

their Rebellion: Nay on their owne also in some maner, because they still keepe and professe his Name, and giue not themselues to any forraine Prince. Did *Dauid* loose his right by the Rebellion of the people vnder his sonne *Absalom*! And therefore when the King subdueth these traitours, hee carrieth himselfe towards them, both in forgiuing and in punishing, as their lawfull and naturall Prince, and not as a Conquerour of new Subiects. So as a strumpet is a true wife, so long as her husband consents to dwell with her, and shee is named by his name; And as *Agar* when shee fled from her mistresse *Sarai*, was still *Sarais* maide, as shee confessed,

feſſed, ſaying, o *I flee from the face of my miſtreſſe Sarai.* In like manner a rebellious, fugitiue, and whooring Church, is ſtill a true Church, ſo long as God keeping the right of a King, of a Maſter, of a Husband ouer her, giueth her not the bill of Diuorcement, but conſents that her Name bee called vpon her, and ſhee ſtill calleth her ſelfe his kingdome, his maide, his wife. Thus God calleth the Iewes *His people*, euen then when he ſaid they were not his people, becauſe hee had not broken the band of marriage with them, and put them away by diuorcement. Therefore he ſaid vnto them; p *Where are the Letters of your mothers diuorcement, whom I haue put away?*

o *Gen.* 16.8.

Eſa. 58.1.

p *Eſa.* 50.

Mea-

Meaning he had not giuen vnto them a writing of diuorcement, but did ſtill acknowledge them to bee his ſpouſe, notwithſtanding their manifold and moſt filthy Whoredomes with falſe Gods, which he charged them with, ſaying vnto them by *Ieremiah*, q *Thou haſt polluted the land with thy whooredomes, and with thy wickedneſſe: Thou haſt a whoores forehead, and refuſeſt to bee aſhamed, wilt thou not for this time cry vnto me, my father thou art the guide of my youth. Turne, O backſliding children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married vnto you*: Or according to the French tranſlation, *I haue the right of an Huſband ouer you.* So after hee had called the ten Tribes r *Lo-ruhama*

q Iere. 3. 14.

r Hoſ. 1. 6, 9.

ma, and Lo-hammi, saying, hee would no more haue mercie vpon them, and that they were not his people, he calleth them his people, [f] *My people,* saith he, *asketh counsell at their stickes, and their stuffe answereth them.*

But after that God had scattered them among the *Medes* and other nations of *Assyria*, and broken his couenant with them, they became not onely in the second, but also in the first sence, *Iesrebel,* and no more *Israel, Lo-ruhama,* and no more *Ruhama, Lo-hammi,* & no more *Hammi.* Then was fulfilled the the propheſie, [t] *Plead with your mother, plead: For ſhee is not my wife, neither am I her husband.* So the Iewes which were Gods people in the midſt of their idolatrie,

[f] *Hoſea* 4.12.

[t] *Hoſea* 2.2.

olatrie, ſince they haue denied Chriſt to bee the Meſſias, the Mediatour betweene GOD and them, and haue crucified the Lord of glory, are no more Gods people, although they beg ſtill that name. u *They are*, ſaith Chriſt, *the Synagogue of Satan: They ſay they are Iewes, and are not, but doe lye:* For ſeeing God x hath broken them off, and grafted the Gentiles in their roome, they qualifie themſelues Gods people as falſely and iniuriouſly, as a whoore lawfully diuorced by her husband, calleth her ſelfe his wife.

u *Reuel.* 3. 9.

x *Rom.* 11 17.

To applie this to the Romane Church, which hath adulterated and corrupted the whole ſeruice of God, and is more

more adulterous then was at any time *Iuda* or *Ephraim*, and therefore is not a true visible Church in the second sence, I say thee is one in some sort in the first. In her God doth still keepe his true word in the Old and New Testament, as the contract of his marriage with her. In her is the true Creed, the true Decalogue, the true Lords Prayer, which *Luther* calleth *the kernel of Christianitie*: In her Christ is Preached, though corruptly. In her the Trinitie and Incarnation of Christ are beleeued: In her the Father, the Sonne and the Holy Ghost are prayed vnto, though in an vnknown tongue to the most part. In her the little children are Baptised in the

Name

Name of the Father, of the Sonne, and of the Holy Ghoſt: And no Diuine will denie that their Baptiſme is a true Sacrament, whereby their children are borne to God, ſeeing wee doe not rebaptiſe them, where leauing her, they adioyne themſelues to vs. Who then can denie, that ſhee is a true Church? For out of the Church there is no Baptiſme, and the Church alone beareth children to God. In her ſitteth the man of ſinne, the ſonne of perdition, who ſitteth [y] *in the Temple of God*, which is the Church. Its graunted that ſhee is Babylon in the ſecond ſence: And [a] *Gods people* is commanded to come out of Babylon. What is Gods people, but Gods Church which

y 2. Theſſ. 2. 4.

a Reuel. 18. 4.

which forsaketh her successiuely, as of old the typicall people came out of the typicall Babylon, not at once, but at many seuerall times? If then we applie vnto her Gods commandement, exhorting her to come out of Babylon, either wee vnderstand not what wee say, or we acknowledge her to bee Gods people, that is Gods Church, though idolatrous, rebellious, and disobedient: Neither shall shee cease to bee Gods people in this sence, till the comming of the blessed day, when the ayre shall rebound with the shouting of the Saints, [b] *Babylon is fallen, shee is fallen that great Citie, because shee made all nations drunke with the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

b *Reuel.* 14.8.

I say then, that as *Ierusalem* was at the same time *the holy Citie*, and *a Harlot*, the Temple was *Bethel and Bethauen*, Gods House, and a house of Iniquitie, the Iewes were *Gods people*, and *no people*, Gods children & the Deuils, *Ephraim* was *Hammi* and *Lo-Hammi*, in diuers respects, euen so the Romish Church is both BETHEL and BABEL, *Bethel* from God, calling her to the communion of his grace in Christ by his Word, and Sacrament of Baptisme, *Babel* from her selfe, because shee hath made a gallimaufrey of the Christian Religion, confounding pell-mell her owne traditions with *Gods* Word, her owne merits with Christs, the bloud of Martyrs with

with the bloud of the Lambe of God, [h] *which taketh away the ſinne of the world*, Purgatorie with the ſame bloud, [i] *which purgeth vs from all ſinne*, Iuſtification by workes with Iuſtification [k] *by faith only*, praying to the Creatures with praying to the Creator, Idols of men, women, beaſts, Angels with Gods worſhip, the mediation of Saints with the mediation of him who is [l] *the ſuretie of the new Teſtament, and is able to ſaue to the vttermoſt all thoſe that come vnto God by him, ſeeing hee euer liueth to make interceſſion for them.* Nay, as *Caluin* ſaid truly, in the Romiſh Church Chriſt is ſcarcely knowne among the Saints, of whom ſome are in Heauen, as the Apoſtles, &c.

h *Iohn* 1.29.

i 1. *Iohn* 1.7.

k *Gal.* 2.16.

l *Heb.* 7.22,25.

ſome on Earth, as the Pope, ſome in Hell, as *Saint George* an Arrian Hereticke, and bloudie Butcher of true Chriſtians, *Saint Dominicke* the firebrand of the warre againſt the *Albigeois*, *Saint Garnet* whom Tyburne ſent to his owne place, to bee rewarded of the Gunnepowder Treaſon: Some did neuer die, becauſe they had neuer the honour to liue, as *Saint Chriſtopher*, *Saint Katherine*, *Saint Vrſule*, *Saint Longin*, who was a Speare. *Saint Eloi* who was two couple of ſharpe nailes, and many more of the ſame ſtuffe. In a word, the roaring of the Camards of *Babal* is ſo lowd in that Church, that Chriſts voice is ſcant heard in her, and yet heard both in the mouth

mouth of theſe Babylonian builders, which vnderſtand not one another, and in the mouthes of the people halting betweene Chriſt and the Pope their *Baal*. And therefore in that behalfe not *that true*, but *a true Chriſtian Church*.

This teſtimony is the praiſe of the moſt wonderfull patience of God, who ſuffereth ſo long that common hackney to braie his Name. It is her ſhame, As it is the ſhame of a Queane married to a good husband, to be conuicted of running vp & downe after ſtrangers. Its a vantage to vs in our imployment for her conuerſion. For as when *Agar* had confeſſed truly that ſhe was *Sarahs* maid, the Angell tooke her at her

word, saying, [m] *Returne to thy Mistresse, and submit thy selfe to her*, and perswaded her: Euen so wee take the *Roman* Church by the necke, when shee confesseth that shee is Christs Church, as shee is indeed, exhorting her to returne vnto Christ, to obey his Word, to submit her selfe vnto him, and to follow the true Faith of the ancient Catholicke and Apostolicke Church. Neither is it any vantage to her against vs, to inforce vs to returne to her, or to vpbraid vs for forsaking her. For as *Moses*, when the people had committed Idolatrie, [n] *tooke his Tabernacle, and pitched it without the Campe, afarre off from the Campe*, breaking of all communication with

m Gen.16.9.

n Exod.33.7.

with those which had broken the Couenant of the LORD their God, till they repented: As God said to *Ieremiah*, of the *Iewes*, which had [o] opened their legges to euery one that passed by, & multiplied their whoredomes, [p] *Cast them out of my sight, and let them goe forth: Let them returne vnto thee: but returne not thou vnto them.* As *Hosea* said of *Ephraim*, [q] *Ephraim is ioyned to Idols, let him alone*; So Christ saith vnto vs, [r] *Come out of Babylon, my people, that yee be not partakers of her sinnes, and that ye receiue not of her plagues*: Her sinnes are a spirituall leprosie. And we run away from leprous men, though true men, and our neereſt and deareſt friends, crying what they are

o Ezech. 16. 25.

p Ier. 15. 1. 19.

q Hosea 4. 17.

r Reuel. 18. 1.

loth to cry, [f] *Vncleane vncleane*, lest their breath should infect vs: Her sinnes are infidelitie, not negatiue, but priuatiue, not in whole, but in part; As Saint *Paul* a beleeuing Iew was *in vnbeliefe* when he persecuted the Church: And Saint *Paul* saith vnto vs [t] *Be ye not vnequally yoked together with vnbeleeuers, &c. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the vncleane thing, and I will receiue you, and will be a Father vnto you, and yee shall bee my sonnes and daughters, saith the Lord Almightie.* A faithfull subiect will not take a traitour, though a subiect, by the hand, nor I a Papist in matter of his Religion: Neither will honest women go to the stewes

f Leuit. 13. 45.

t 2. Cor. 6. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

 with

with the greateſt Lady, thogh ſhee be a great ones wife.

This I haue euer taught priuately, Preached publikely, publiſhed in Printed Bookes againſt Papiſts, during theſe thirti three yeares of my Miniſtrie in the French Churches, without any aduantage to our Aduerſaries, without any contradiction of our diuines, without any acception taken againſt it by our Churches, or any particular among the brethren, which all in their name Preach and publiſh that they are of the ſame mind, calling themſelues *The Reformed Churches*, and our Religion *The reformed religion*. For as the good Kings of Iuda did not build a new Temple, call to God a

new people, set vp a new Religion, but repurge and clense the old Temple, restore the ancient Religion, exhorted Gods people to shake off the new inuentions of the new patched Religion, and to returne to the Lord their God by the olde way, which their fathers had beaten, and *Moses* had traced vnto them in the Law; And as *Zorobabel*, *Esdras*, [n] *Nehemiah*, *Ieshuah*, builded the Wals of Ierusalem vpon the ancient foundation, euerie man building next himselfe; Euen so the Protestant Diuines haue euerie one next himselfe, not builded a new Church vpon a new foundation, but repurged the auncient Church of idolatrie, superstition, false inter-

n *Neh.* 3. & 4.

pre-

pretations of the Scriptures, and traditions of men, whereof shee was fuller then euer *Augeas* his Stable was full of mucke, but beaten downe, and burned with the fire of Gods word the Wals [x] *of Wood, Hay, Stubble*, which the Babylonian builders had rayſed vpon the old foundation, which is *Christ Iesus*, and edified vpon it a faire Palace of *Siluer, Gold, precious Stones*. This same is the opinion also of my Collegues of the French Church of this Citie of London.

x 1. Cor 3.10, 10,11.

If any selfe-conceited Christian thinketh this an aduantage, rather then a disparagement & disgrace to that punke, the *Romane* Church, and taketh thereby occasion to perseuere

to

to be her Bawd or Stalion, and to runne a whoring with her, I say with the Psalmist, y *The wicked hath left off to bee wise, and to doe good*. And with the Angell, a *Hee that is vniust, let him be vniust still: And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still*: For neither must an honest heart speake a lie for the good that may come of it, Nor conceale in time and place a necessarie truth for any euill that may insue of it. If to harden more and more the flintie hearts of some vnto death, it will soften and melt the iron hearts of others vnto life, that seeing among vs the mudde and dirt of humane traditions, wherewith the Pope and his Clergie had furred and soyled the bright-

shining

y Psal. 36. 3.

a Reuel. 22. 11.

shining glasse of the Gospel, wiped away from this heauenly mirror of Gods face, they may come vnto vs, and [b] beholding with open face, as in a glasse, the glorie of the Lord, may be changed with vs into the same image, from glorie to glorie, euen as by the Spirit of the Lord.

[b] 2. Cor. 3. 18

Which last effect I pray with my heart your Reconciler may haue with those that are *children of peace*: And so recommending your Lordship, with all your learned, eloquent, sound, and vsefull labours to GODS most powerfull blessing and my selfe to the continuance of your godly

godly Prayers, and old friendship, I remaine for euer

Your Lordships most humble and affectionate Seruant,

Gilbert Primrose.

From London the 26. of February, 1629.

¶ To my Worthy and *much respected Friend* Mr. H. Chomley.

Master Cholmley, *I haue perused your learned and full reply to Master* Burtons *answere; wherein you haue in a iudicious eye abundantly righted your self, and cleared a iust cause; so,*

as

as the Reader would wonder where an Aduersarie might find ground to raise an opposition; But, let me tell you, Were it a Booke written by the pen of an Angell from Heauen, in this subiect, I should doubt whether to wish it publique. How true, how iust soeuer the plea be, I find (such is the selfe-loue, and partialitie of our corrupt nature) the quarrell is inlarged by multiplying of words; when I see a fire quenched with Oyle, I will expect to see a con-

controuerſie of this nature, ſtinted by publike altercation. New matter ſtill riſes in the agitation, and giues hint to a fore-reſolued oppoſite, of a freſh diſquiſition: So as we may ſooner ſee an end of the common peace, then of an vnkindly iarre in the Church: eſpecially ſuch a one, as is fomented with a miſtaken Zeale on the one ſide, and with a confidence of knowledge, on the other. Silence hath ſomtimes quieted ſuch like miſ-raiſed brabbles, neuer, interchange of

words;

words; This very queſtion was on foot, ſome fortie yeares agoe, in the hote chaſe of great Authors, but, whether through the ingenuitie of the parties, or ſome ouer-ruling act of Diuine Prouidence, it ſoone died, without noyſe; ſo I wiſh it may now doe; Rather let the weaker title goe away with the laſt word, then the Church ſhall bee diſtracted; For that Poſition of mine, which occaſioned your vindication, you ſee it ſufficiently abetted, and determi-

ned

ned, by ſo reuerend authoritie, as admits no exception; I dare ſay; No learned Diuine of our owne Church, or the foraine, can but ſubſcribe (in this our ſenſe) to the iudgement of theſe Worthies; To draw forth therefore this cord of contention to any further length, were no leſſe needleſſe, then preiudiciall to the publike peace; Hee is not worthy to bee ſatisfied, that will yet wrangle.

As for thoſe perſonall aſperſions that are caſt vpon

you by malice, be perſwaded to deſpiſe them. Theſe Weſterne parts, where your reputation is deſeruedly precious, know your Zeale for Gods truth no leſſe feruent, (though better gouerned) then the moſt fierie of your Cenſurers; No man more hateth Popiſh Superſtition, only your fault is, that you doe not more hate errour, then iniuſtice; and cannot abide wrong meaſure offered to the worſt enemie. Neither bee you troubled with that idle exprobration

of

of a Prebendary retribuſi-
on; who would care for a
contumely ſo void of truth?
God knowes that worthleſſe
gift was conferred vpon you,
ere this taske came into ei-
ther of our thoughts; And
who ſo knowes the entire
reſpects betwixt vs, from
our very cradles, till this
day, may well thinke that
a Prebend of three pounds
by yeare, need not go for a
fee, where there is ſo much,
and ſo ancient cauſe of
deareneſſe: I am ſorrie to
ſee ſuch rancour vnder the

cote of Zeale; Surely, nothing but mere malice can bee guiltie of this charge; no leſſe then of that other enuious challenge of your decay of graces, of falling from your firſt loue, from induſtry to eaſe, from a weekly, to a Monethly preaching; When thoſe that know the ſtate of your Tiuerton, the foure-parted diuiſion of that charge, and your forced confinement to your owne day, by publique authoritie, both Spirituall, and Temporall, must

must needs acquit you, and cry downe the wrong of an accuſer; As for the vigour of Gods good graces in you, both common, and ſanctifying, all the Countrie are your ample witneſſes, I that haue interknowne you from our childhoods, cannot but profeſſe to find the entrance of your age no leſſe aboue the beſt of your youth in abilities, then in time; and ſtill, no leſſe fruitfull in promiſes; of increaſe, then in eminent performances. What need I vrge this?

your

your Aduersaries do enough feele your worth; So as (to speake seriously) I cannot sufficiently wonder at the libertie of those men, who professing a strict conscience of their wayes, dare let their pens, or tongues loose to so iniurious and vncharitable detraction, whereof they know the iust auenger is in Heauen; It should not be thus betwixt Brethren, no not with enemies.

For the mayne businesse, There wants not confidence on either side; I am appealed to

to by both; an vnmeet Iudge, consideringmy so deepe ingagements. But, if my vmperage may stand, I award an eternall silence to both parts; Sit downe in peace, then, you, and your worthy second; Whose yong ripenes, and modest and learned discourse, is worthy of better intertainment then contempt; And let your Zealous Opponents say, that you haue ouer-comne your selues in a resolued cessation of pens; and them, in a loue of peace.

Fare-

Farewell, from your louing Friend and ancient Colleague.

Ios. Exon.

FINIS.